

INDIAN POSSESSIONS
AND

SETTLED AREAS IN NEW YORK STATE
FROM 1771 TO 1820

BY W. PIERREPONT WHITE

Reprint from Volume VII
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The Rochester Historical Society

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296 GENESEE STREET
UTICA, NEW YORK

March 23-1929

Dear Mr. Coleman.

Here is the story
to answer your kind inquiry for
the same.

Hugh White the New England
Pioneer Frontiersman - had quite
a bit to do in making the country.

Neither Warrington - nor Jappene
nor Hamilton, nor Schuyler, nor Franklin,
the heroic figures of the day, had their
names honored by being used in naming
Counties - in New York State - or such

296 GENESEE STREET
UTICA, NEW YORK

a large area of land as Whites Town
Montgomery - only - was honored with a
larger area.

I do not yet know why Hugh
White - was so honored as to have
his name used as the foundation
name - on - over $\frac{1}{2}$ of the entire area
of New York State, but am at work
piecing things together so that it
may not be a Vanished Heritage.

Very Sincerely

W. Thompson White

Indian Possessions and Settled Areas in New York State from 1771 to 1820

By W. Pierrepont White

President of the Oneida County Historical Society

CONTRIBUTED FOR PUBLICATION, VOLUME VII, PUBLICATION
FUND SERIES, OF THE ROCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



THE vast area of the State of New York dominated by the Iroquois from the time of Christopher Columbus, was still in their undisputed control in 1775, with the exception of a narrow strip on both banks of the Mohawk from Schenectady to a short distance beyond German Flats.

The treaty of Tawasentha between the Dutch and Iroquois at Norman's Kill near Albany in 1618, permitted the Dutch to acquire land titles from the Mohican and Hudson River tribes of Indians. As time passed, this first Indian treaty as made by the Dutch, was assumed by the English, and was ratified thirty-nine times between 1618 and 1779, when General Sullivan's raid broke the strength of the Iroquois Confederacy.

The land of the Hudson River settlement was purchased by the Dutch from tribes who were kin of the Hurons, the bitter enemies of the Six Nations. On Long Island, and in the Catskill area, the land was bought from tribes subject to the Six Nations. In neither case did the Six Nations care what became of the lands of these tribes.

It was twenty-five years after the treaty of Tawasentha that the Indians permitted a settlement to be made at Schenectady, seventeen miles west of Fort Orange. Another eighteen years elapsed before Jelles Fonda was permitted to establish a store at Fonda, twenty-seven miles west of Sche-

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nectady. Earlier settlements on the river banks west of Fonda and on the Schoharie had been granted gradually to the Hollanders, as they did not interfere with the Indian hunting-grounds in the rear of these grants. In 1722, on the invitation of the Mohawks, came the Palatine settlements at Stone Arabia, which, prior to the Revolution, grew westward to the site of Deerfield, now the 17th Ward in the City of Utica.

After taking over the government in 1664, the English, assuming the benefits of the early Dutch treaty of Tawasentha, became an ally of the Iroquois, with whose aid they drove the French from Canada.

William Johnson, destined to become the controlling power on the North American continent, made his first settlement near Amsterdam in 1738. By his matrimonial alliances with Caroline, and on her death with Molly Brant—two women of the Mohawk tribe of the Iroquois, who in themselves and through their relatives were in the supreme power in tribal and Confederacy control—Sir William became the arbiter in North America of the Indian and the Colonial Indian policy of England, and directed these policies from his residence in the dominating valley of the Mohawk, 1738-1774. During this period, his unswerving fidelity to the rights of the Indians upheld the treaty of Tawasentha, except as changed by the treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768, and grants made along the Mohawk River, some of which gave offense to the Indians.

NEW YORK STATE AREA MAPS OF 1771 and 1775

These conditions, from 1609 to 1788, held our early settlements for 179 years to Long Island, the Mohawk, Champlain, and Hudson River Valleys, while the ancestral homes of the Iroquois occupied the balance of the present area of the State.

The Guy Johnson Area Map of 1771, and the T. G. Best Area Map of 1775, published herein, show the extent of the Indian possessions.

NEW YORK STATE AREA MAP OF 1786

The Area Map of 1786 shows the location and distribution

of the thirteen million acres of land belonging to the Six Nations which New York and Massachusetts divided between themselves by the Hartford Convention, forcing a greater part of the Indians to remove to Brantford, Ontario, Canada, to occupy lands granted them by England. In 1786 the State's white population approximated 190,000, and was confined to the shaded area on the Mohawk-Hudson and Long Island, shown on the Area Map of 1786. In the balance of the State was an Indian population of about 17,000. In northern New York there were five million acres of land not affected by the claim of Massachusetts which, plus the thirteen million acres above referred to, made a total of eighteen million acres, which were added to Montgomery County in 1788 by Act of the Legislature and called "White's-Town."

The Dutch settlements, commencing near Albany in 1614, have a background of over three hundred years. The Dutch followed the Mohawk to Schenectady and Fonda and they also settled on the Schoharie Creek. The Palatines came from the country south of the Rhine, driven from their homes by devastating wars. As stated above, their settlement in the Mohawk Valley has a background of two hundred years, from 1722. They settled on both sides of the river from the mouth of the Schoharie Creek to the Weaver clearing at Deerfield Corners, a district of about fifty miles long by ten miles wide.

Sir William Johnson's settlement lay on the north of the Mohawk River between the Dutch and the Palatines. Oriskany Patent, Fonda's Patent and Coxe's Patent were on the conflux of the Oriskany Creek with the Mohawk and the head-waters of the Mohawk. These three patents were at the very western extreme of our colonial land grants and formed the frontier line of both the Province of New York and the County of Tryon. On their western and northern lines lay the country of the Six Nations. These facts are clearly shown on the Area Maps of 1775 and 1786.

The millions of acres procured for £10,000 at the treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768, were bought from the subjugated tribes of the Iroquois by Sir William Johnson, who took title to the entire area in the name of King George III. This area lay in the rear of all colonies having "ocean to ocean"

grants included in their earlier charters. King George's possession effectively blocked all hope of expansion except on the King's terms. This led to Dunmore's War in Virginia and was one of the primary causes of the Revolution.

Not until Sir William Johnson negotiated the treaty of Fort Stanwix with 3,400 of the Six Nations and their dependent tribes, was a definite western boundary for the Province of New York established. At that date, 1768, this was established from Fort Bull to the Pennsylvania Line. In 1772, this line became the western boundary of Tryon County which was set off from Albany County in 1772, at the request of Sir William Johnson. The northern boundary of Tryon County followed the lines of Fonda's Patent from Fort Bull to the north and east, following the northern line of the other patents as they had been granted northerly from the Mohawk River. North and west of these lines of Tryon County all other area in the limits of our present State was the property of the Six Nations.

NEW YORK STATE AREA MAP OF 1788 SHOWING WHITE'S-TOWN

As soon as the Revolution ceased, the great immigration from New England poured into the Iroquois lands. In June 1784, Hugh White and his six sons made the first settlement of New Englanders west of the Palatine settlements at the mouth of the Sauquoit Creek and the Mohawk. His settlement was the furthest up the Mohawk and deepest into the Indian country. In 1788 all of the lands of the Six Nations, Indians and all, were included in Montgomery County and immediately designated as the town of White's-Town, named, as was the custom, after the first settler. Less than 200 white inhabitants occupied this area at that time. In 1787 there were eleven homes at Hugh White's settlement, five at Rome, three at Oriskany, three in Utica and three in Westmoreland. Today there are thirty counties which trace their chain of title as having been included in the original limits of White's-Town and County of Montgomery. The 1920 census gives these counties a population of 2,766,266 and the State a population of 10,386,773. It is to White's-Town has come the unique distinction of being called

the "Mother of Counties," and she gladly welcomed to her Historic Pageant in August, 1923, the 2,766,266 children then residing in the thirty counties that have been created from her territory by acts of the Legislature from 1789 to 1859, as follows:

Ontario	1789	Cattaraugus	1808
Tioga	1791	Chataqua	1808
Onondaga	1794	Cortland	1808
Steuben	1796	Niagara	1808
Oneida	1798	Oswego	1816
Chenango	1798	Tompkins	1817
Cayuga	1799	Erie	1821
St. Lawrence	1802	Livingston	1821
Genesee	1802	Monroe	1821
Seneca	1804	Yates	1823
Lewis	1805	Wayne	1823
Jefferson	1805	Orleans	1824
Allegany	1806	Chemung	1836
Madison	1806	Wyoming	1841
Broome	1806	Schuyler	1859

The first subdivision of this area into land grants from the State of New York is shown on the Area Map of 1798. Ontario County, created 1789, and subdivided in 1796 to make Steuben County, would give that date to the map, except that "Utica" is also on the map and was incorporated as a village in 1798, abandoning its previous title of "Old Fort Schuyler."

The great New England migration to the State would have none of the Dutch names. Old Fort Schuyler became Utica; Fort Schuyler, the rechristened Fort Stanwix, became Rome; New Amsterdam on Buffalo Creek, was not permitted to carry its honored name, and the New Englanders insisted on calling it Buffalo. Three of these distinctively New England settlements have become cities and are about to have centennials—Utica in 1932, Buffalo fifty-nine days later in the same year, and Rochester in 1934. Rochester at the present time is more typically a product of New England than Utica or Buffalo, and these centennials will follow the Revolutionary sesquicentennials. The area now occupied by these cities was, in 1788, in White's-Town, County of Montgomery.



AREA MAP OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, 1771

SHOWING THE EXTENSIVE TERRITORY HELD BY THE IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY UP TO THE TIME OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

PROVINCE of NEW YORK

in
1775

showing

INDIAN POSSESSIONS & SETTLED AREAS

prepared for
W. P. Barrett White, President
Mohawk Valley Historic Association
by
Tharston Gilbert Best
June, 1922



LEGEND

- Dutch
- Polish
- English
- Indian

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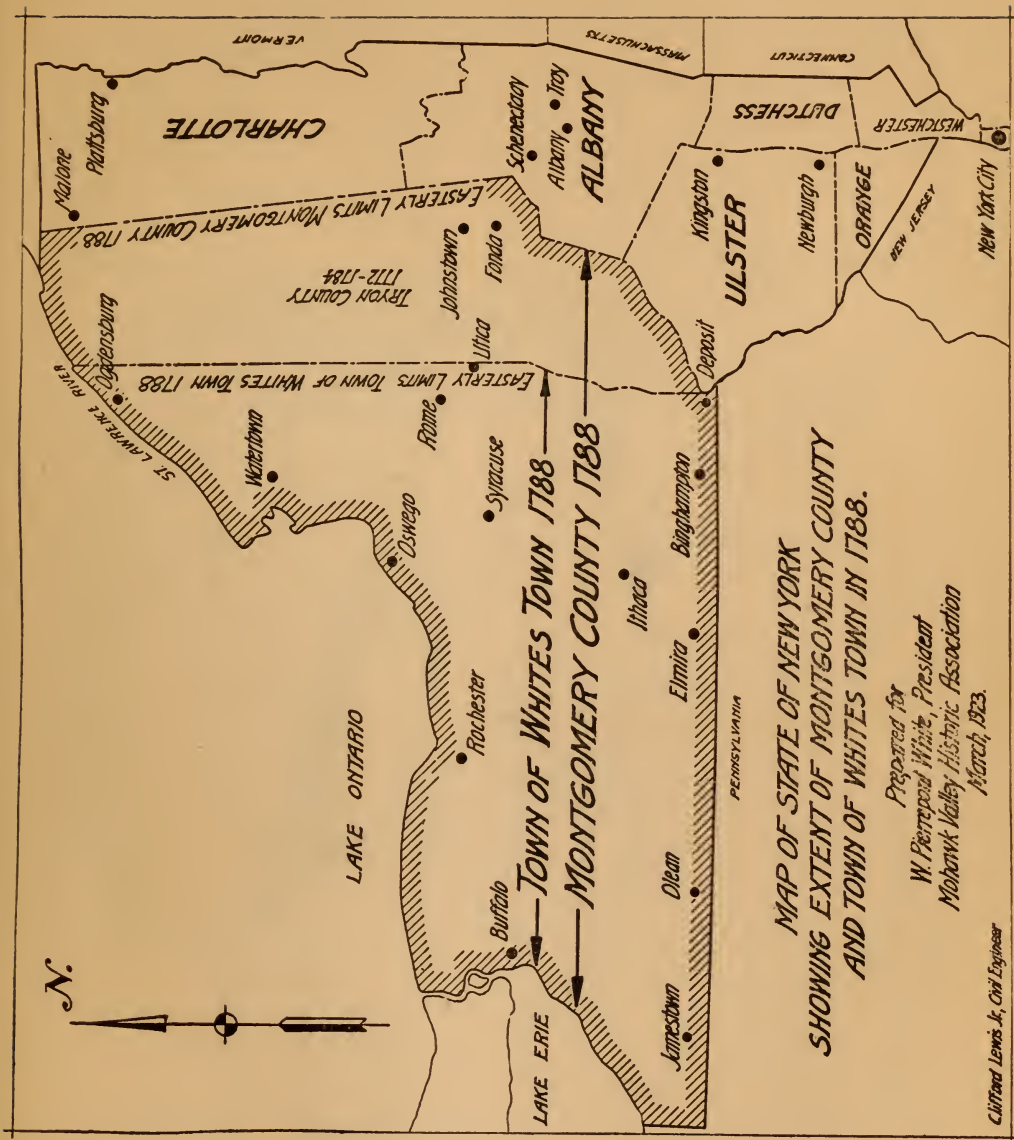
AREA MAP OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, 1775

SHOWING THE SMALL AMOUNT OF TERRITORY HELD BY WHITE MEN
AT THE TIME OF THE BEGINNING OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.



AREA MAP OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, 1786

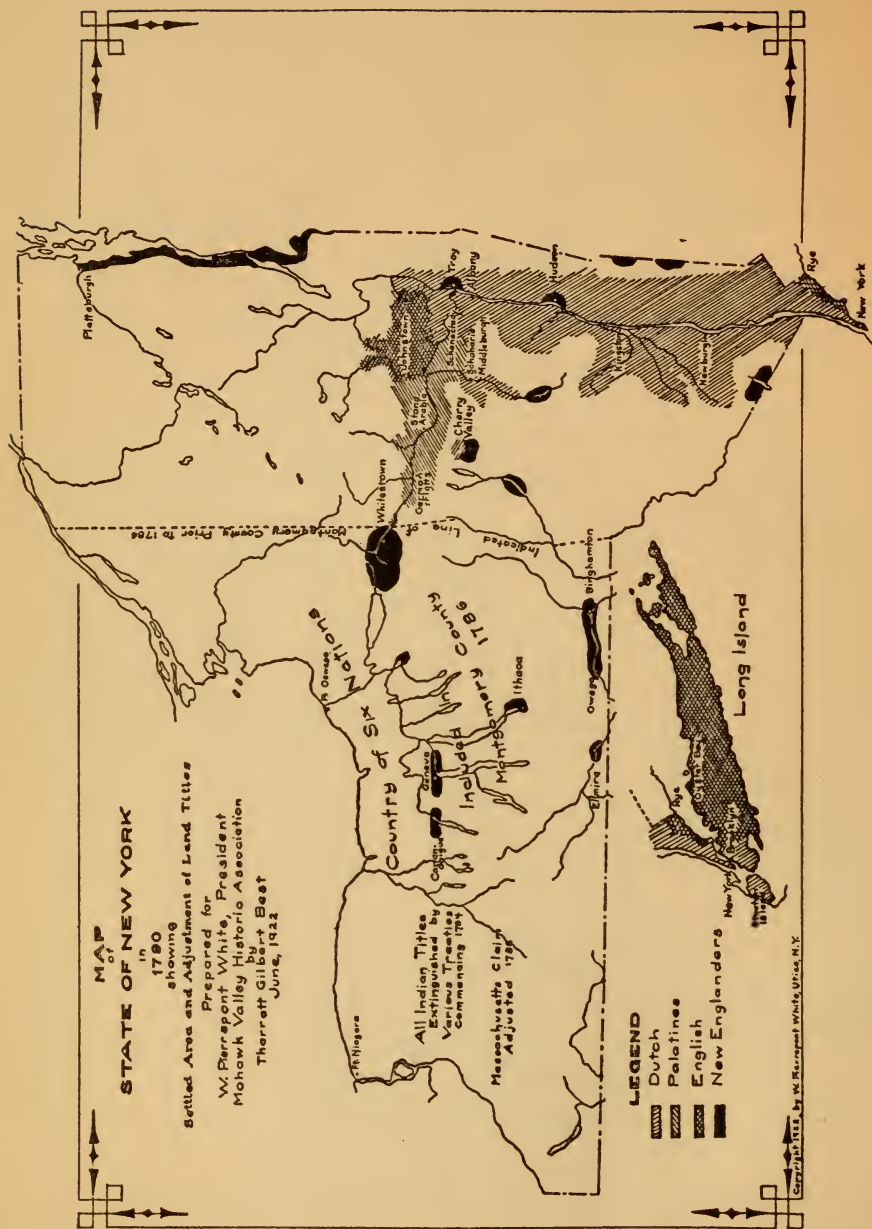
SHOWING THE DIVISION OF THE THIRTEEN MILLION ACRES OF LAND BETWEEN MASSACHUSETTS AND NEW YORK BY THE HARTFORD CONVENTION. THIS MAP ALSO SHOWS THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE STATE'S FIRST SETTLERS; AND THE SENECA COUNTRY, WHICH WAS THE ORIGINAL PHELPS AND GORHAM PURCHASE.



MAP OF STATE OF NEW YORK
 SHOWING EXTENT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY
 AND TOWN OF WHITES TOWN IN 1788.

Prepared for
 W. Pierrepont White, President
 Mohawk Valley Historic Association
 March, 1923.

Clifford Lewis, Jr., Civil Engineer



AREA MAP OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, 1790
SHOWING ADJUSTMENT OF LAND TITLES.



AREA MAP OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, 1798

SHOWING THE FINAL FORM OF THE PHELPS AND GORHAM PURCHASE,
AND THE GENERAL DIVISION OF THE ENTIRE TERRITORY.

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1820
showing
REPLACEMENT OF THE SIX NATIONS
BY
NEW ENGLAND MIGRATIONS
prepared for
W. Pierrpont White, President
Mohawk Valley Historic Association
by
Tharrett Gilbert Best
June, 1923



Pre-Revolutionary Settlements
New Englanders
Other Settlers

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AREA MAP OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, 1820
SHOWING THE EXTENSIVE TERRITORY SETTLED BY THE PIONEERS FROM NEW ENGLAND

In March, 1784, Tryon County was renamed Montgomery County in honor of General Richard Montgomery, who died heroically before Quebec, Dec. 31, 1775. During the six years immediately following 1784, the New England immigration had begun; the Indian land titles were in process of extinguishment by purchase and treaty; the Massachusetts claim was adjusted; and the eighteen million acres of land belonging to the Six Nations were added to Montgomery County by Act of Legislature, 1778, and called White's-Town.

NEW YORK STATE AREA MAP OF 1790

The advancing New England settlements are shown on the Area Map of 1790. The entire territory of the State of New York, including the eighteen million acres of land taken from the Indians at the close of the Revolutionary War, and added to the County of Montgomery in 1788, as the town of White's-Town, was being parceled out by the land office and subdivided by its purchasers for sale to settlers, during the ten years from 1788 to 1798.

NEW YORK STATE AREA MAP OF 1798

The New York State land grants as they appeared in 1798, are shown on the "Map of the Middle States of North America showing the position of the Geneseo Country comprehending the Counties of Ontario and Steuben as laid off in Townships of Six Miles Square Each," published herein.

NEW YORK STATE AREA MAP OF 1820

By 1820 the eighteen million of acres of lands of Western, Central and Northern New York were largely taken up by settlers from New England. Their soldiers had brought back glowing accounts of the open fields and fertile lands, which they had crossed with General Sullivan's expedition to punish the Six Nations. The vast extent of the New England invasion is revealed on the Area Map of 1820.

The three epochs illustrated by Tharratt G. Best in the New York State Area Maps of 1775, 1790 and 1820, reveal astonishing facts. They show how the intensely interesting history of the Mohawk Valley during the French and Indian

Wars, as well as the noble and heroic parts played in the Revolution by the inhabitants of the Valley, were suddenly isolated from general knowledge when the lands of the Six Nations were taken up by the victorious soldiers of New England, who knew little of, and cared less for, the original settlers inhabiting the Valley. Andrew S. Draper once said: "New York made history and Massachusetts wrote it."

In closing, it is interesting to stress the importance of New York State in the Revolution. New York was the frontier of the Iroquois Country. The Iroquois, with the exception of the Oneidas and Tuscaroras, were, during the Revolution, the allies of Great Britain. From their limitless forests within the present bounds of New York, these Indians were led forth in pitiless expeditions, committing ghastly frontier horrors, which depopulated the homes of the settlers. These settlers were engaged annually in raising the grain which fed the army of Washington while at Newburgh, Valley Forge, or in New Jersey. So near were West Point and Kingston to the Ulster County frontier that it was constantly guarded by regulars against the raiders from the forests, but not so the Mohawk Valley settlements, the defence of which fell upon the inhabitants, who received scant aid.

From 1775 to 1783, Long Island and the Champlain, Hudson, and Mohawk Valleys, furnished the battlefields for the ninety-two recorded conflicts that occurred in this State. The entire eight-year period was one of continuous conflict for these valleys. Massachusetts had eleven conflicts in 1775, three in 1776, and none thereafter. Connecticut had a total of fourteen engagements; Rhode Island and Pennsylvania, five conflicts each; New Jersey thirty-one, Georgia twenty-two, Virginia sixteen, while South Carolina had seventy-nine. New York furnished the greater number of battlefields for both the French and Indian Wars as well as the Revolution. Some of these conflicts took place on Long Island, but the most of them were quite closely confined to the Mohawk, Champlain, and Hudson River Valley settlements, which were limited to a strip of land less than eight miles wide on the Mohawk, and not over thirty on the Hudson.

The battlefields of New York, surrounded by forests and

closely confined to her eastern borders, penetrated for 250 miles the principal commercial and military valleys on the eastern slope of the continent, and today have a background of from 200 to 300 years of occupancy and settlement, a condition existing at no other point on the North Atlantic seaboard.

Albany (1614-1617) next to Jamestown, Va., (1607) and St. Augustine, Fla., (1565), is the oldest settlement in the present United States; and if Jamestown is thrown out, as deserted in 1676, Albany may perhaps be called the oldest with a continuous life, though its official settlement date, 1623, is given as at the close of the twelve years Armistice with Spain (1609-1621), up to which time the Albany occupancy was for trade only, and not for permanent settlement; this makes the official record later than that of Plymouth (1620).

No state in the Union has a greater history than New York, but much of this history has not found its way into the textbooks and, therefore, is unknown to the average citizen. New York State's immortal contribution to the winning of the Revolution and the building of our Nation should be known more widely.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. William Pierrepont White, of Utica, New York, author of the above article, is a descendant from Elder John White, one of the first settlers of Cambridge and Hadley, Massachusetts, and of Hartford, Connecticut. The history of the White family in New York State begins with Hugh White, the pioneer settler of White's-Town, fifth in descent from Elder John White.

Among the many noted members of this family, three have made conspicuous contributions to the development of America through their public services affecting Water, Steam and Highway Transportation.

Canvass White gave his life to canal construction, beginning as an Engineer on the Erie Canal, and being largely responsible for its successful completion. As a Civil Engineer he had no superior in his day, and his genius was recognized universally; although he was poorly rewarded for the enormous wealth he created for numerous communities by his unremitting labors to develop transportation by waterways.

William C. Young, another member of the White family, was a noted Civil Engineer, who was a pioneer in railroad construction. He proposed, and introduced, the present system of supporting car rails on the roadbed by the use of cross-ties, a fundamental idea in railroad construction which has never been changed. Among other business connections, he became Chief Engineer, and then President, of the Hudson River Railroad, and

was responsible for fixing the grade of the New York Central as the only "water level route."

Mr. William Pierrepont White is entitled to be called the "Father of the Good Roads System" in the United States. For sixteen years (1890-1906), he led the fight to create public support of hard-surfaced roads until, at last, the people of the State of New York adopted an amendment to their constitution providing fifty million dollars for highway improvement (1906). This started the general good roads movement throughout the country, and laid the foundation for our automobile age. These good roads ended the isolation of rural communities and of the American farms, thereby adding to our national resources wealth beyond computation.

Owing to his ancestry and distinguished public services, Mr. William Pierrepont White, naturally, has become greatly interested in local history, especially that of the Mohawk Valley. For a number of years he has served as the President of the Oneida County Historical Society, and is a recognized authority on matters concerning the early history of New York State.

New York State in 1782

led in the Creation of the

North West Territory

thus accomplishing the purposes of the

Sullivan Campaign in 1779

This same VOL. VII compiled and edited by Edward R. Foreman, Chairman of the Publication Committee, contains a paper entitled "Old Northampton, in Western New York" by Albert Hazen Wright of Cornell University, of which the editor makes the following:

EDITOR'S NOTE: "Mr. William Pierrepont White, President of the Oneida County Historical Society, author of the article, INDIAN POSSESSIONS AND SETTLED AREAS IN NEW YORK STATE, 1771 to 1820, published herein, has written in appreciation of Professor Albert Hazen Wright's article on OLD NORTHAMPTON as follows:

"Prof. Albert Hazen Wright's article regarding OLD NORTHAMPTON is the most important contribution to New York State History since 1849, when O'Callaghan's, "Documentary History of the State of New York," was published. In saying this I have in mind, Hugh Hastings' "Public Papers of George Clinton" (1899); James A. Roberts, "New York in the Revolution" (1898-; James Sullivan's, "Sir William Johnson's Papers" (1921- and also, "The Minutes of the Albany Committee of Correspondence," published under Mr. Sullivan's direction, (1923). Also the very valuable additional volume of "Sir William Johnson's Papers" published under the direction of Dr. Alexander C. Flick, (1927).

"Prof. Wright's work is the first original source-material, research work done affecting any part of the temporary Municipal Governments set up in the eighteen million acres of Indian Lands, which the *Sullivan Campaign of 1779*, enabled the United States to acquire from the Indians for the States of New York and Massachusetts, in the adjustment of the ocean-to-ocean grants of New York, Massachusetts and Connecticut, in exchange for their releases of title to the North West Territory as set up in 1787.

It is the first history of our chain of title, to a part of our present holdings in the subdivision of these Indian Lands; passing step by step from the aborigines to the pioneer settlers.

"Prof. Wright's maps, showing the successive subdivisions of the territory by Legislative enactment, illustrate clearly the legal steps taken in the mad rush for acquiring the Indian Lands at this period of New York State History.

"Hough's 'Covered Wagon', commencing at the crossing of the Mississippi in further pursuit of the Indian Lands, is Chapter Three in the expansion of New England and Virginia over Indian Lands.

Chapters One and Two, are the story of the Mohawk Valley route to White's-Town; the Genesee Country, Ohio, and the Connecticut Reserve. White's-Town was settled in 1784 by the pioneer Hugh White who, with his five sons, cracked the whip on his ox-team, when he started from Middletown, Connecticut, as the first from New England to make and mark the trail to the Indian Lands.

"No less interesting was the rush from Virginia through the Cumberland Gap, and the settlement of Cincinnati, on the Ohio, in 1788.

"*Old Northampton*" is an appropriate prelude to the Centennial of Rochester to be celebrated in 1934, which celebration will be preceded, in 1932, by the Centennials of Utica and Buffalo. *The settlement of these three communities rose out of the Sullivan Campaign, in 1779; and they are the first of the New England settlements to become cities, and to acquire one hundred years of historical background.*"

This reprint is sent you with the compliments of the author, to make the *Sullivan Campaign* more readily understandable in the news articles that will fill our press during the coming season, of its 150th anniversary, to be celebrated by the State of New York, under the direction of the Educational Department.

New York State

is entitled to be credited with the solution
for successfully creating the

North West Territory

Its successful solution enabled the Colonies to become a Nation, but not until after the adjustment of their conflicting land claims. In this adjustment New York State led.

